

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05

NRC-05 /097 W

----- 085316

R 151729Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8179

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

CINC USAREUR HEIDELBERG

CINC USAFE RAMSTEIN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 06507

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR, GW

SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER COMMENTS ON SECURITY
POLICY

REF: BONN 01108 DTG 211744Z JAN 76 (NOTAL)

1. FRG DEFENSE MINISTER GEORG LEBER GRANTED AN INTER-
VIEW LAST WEEK TO THE "FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE'S"
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POLITICAL-MILITARY EXPERT, ADELBERT WEINSTEIN, IN WHICH

THE DEFENSE MINISTER MAKES SOME INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS. THE INTERVIEW APPEARED IN THE APRIL 10 FAZ EDITION, WITH WEINSTEIN FOLLOWING UP IN AN EDITORIAL ON APRIL 12 IN WHICH HE CONFESSES HE IS TEMPTED TO SPEAK OF A "LEBER DOCTRINE."

2. THE BASIC THRUST OF LEBER'S REMARKS IS THAT DETERRENCE IS BECOMING MORE CREDIBLE AND CONSEQUENTLY THERE IS MORE SECURITY THROUGH "PRECISION-GUIDED MUNITIONS (PGM'S). LEBER IS CONVINCED THAT THE WEST CAN RAISE THE DEFENSIVE POWER OF ITS FORCES TO BALANCE OUT FULLY THE NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY OF THE SOVIETS. HE FORESEES POLITICAL DETERRENCE BEING ENHANCED THROUGH ADVANCES IN MILITARY TECHNOLOGY, CITING IN PARTICULAR THE ADVENT OF ANTI-TANK WEAPONS WHICH CAN BE USED TO NEUTRALIZE SUPERIOR TANK FORCES.

3. LEBER ARGUES THAT TECHNOLOGY HAS CATAPULTED THE CONVENTIONAL FORCES OF A DEFENSIVE ARMY INTO A NEW DIMENSION. PGM'S RADICALLY CHANGE THE BATTLEFIELD AND THEREBY TACTICS AND STRATEGY. THE DEFENDER HAS THE ADVANTAGE. WHEREAS TODAY ONE SPEAKS OF THE "ATOMIC THRESHOLD", LEBER BELIEVES THAT WE SHOULD BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO SPEAKING OF THE "TECHNOLOGICAL THRESHOLD."

4. LEBER POINTS OUT THAT THE NEW TECHNICAL DIMENSIONS OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AFFECT ATOMIC STRATEGY ALSO. HE NOTES THAT, AFTER THE VLADIVOSTOK UNDERSTANDING, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR EUROPE TO IMAGINE THAT TACTICAL AND STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS WILL BE USED. HOWEVER, ATOMIC WEAPONS REMAIN FOR NATO THE GREAT STRATEGIC SUPPORT FOR THE STRATEGY OF DETERRENCE. THEREFORE, LEBER, IN THE RECENT DEFENSE "WHITE PAPER" (REFTEL), REFERRED TO THE CENTRAL IMPORTANCE OF THE AMERICAN NUCLEAR PRESENCE IN EUROPE. "SECURITY WITHOUT THE ATOM IS NOT SECURITY." INDEED, THE "ATOMIC THRESHOLD" MUST BE KEPT HIGH. THE "TECHNOLOGICAL THRESHOLD" CAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, BE QUITE LOW.

5. LEBER POINTS OUT THAT WEAPONS CAN BE USED WHICH HAVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE SAME DESTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL AS ATOMIC WEAPONS. THE

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NRC-05 /097 W

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R 151729Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8180

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

CINC USAREUR HEIDELBERG

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DEFENSIVE STRENGTH OF THE WEST IS GROWING SO THAT THE
CHANCES FOR AN AGGRESSOR TO ACHIEVE A VICTORY IN THE
CLASSICAL SENSE ARE SLIM.

6. LEBER CONTINUES THAT THE MILITARY PRESSURE WHICH A
NUMERICALLY SUPERIOR OPPONENT CAN EXERT WILL BE REDUCED
AS THE BUNDESWEHR IS INCREASINGLY MODERNIZED. THE
PRESSURE WILL BE NEUTRALIZED AND FINALLY WILL NOT HAVE
ANY MORE POLITICAL EFFECT. NEUTRALIZATION OF THE
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ENEMY'S MILITARY STRENGTH WILL GIVE THE FRG COMPLETE
FREEDOM OF POLITICAL MOVEMENT.

7. IN CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW, LEBER PRAISES FRANCE IN
PARTICULAR, POINTING OUT THAT THE TECHNOLOGICAL FUTURE
HAS BEGUN NOT ONLY FOR THE FRG AND THE US, BUT FOR THE
FRENCH AS WELL. LEBER SAYS IT IS CLEAR TO HIM THAT
FRANCE WILL DECIDE FOR THE WEST IF THE EAST STARTS A
WAR.

8. REGARDING THE SOUTHERN FLANK PROBLEMS OF THE
ALLIANCE, LEBER ADVOCATES HELP AND A PATIENT ATTITUDE
RATHER THAN CRITICISM VIS-A-VIS SUCH COUNTRIES AS
PORTUGAL, GREECE AND TURKEY.

9. COMMENT: A MEMBER OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY
PLANNING STAFF INFORMS US THAT LEBER DID NOT HAVE ANY
POLICY PAPER PREPARED FOR HIS INTERVIEW WITH WEINSTEIN.
THE STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM BY WEINSTEIN REPRESENT
THE AUTHOR'S INTERPRETATION OF WHAT LEBER SAID DURING
THE COURSE OF THE INTERVIEW. THE PLANNING STAFF OFFICIAL
BELIEVES WEINSTEIN IS STRETCHING A POINT TO SPEAK
OF A NEW "LEBER DOCTRINE." THE OFFICIAL THINKS THE
DEFENSE MINISTER WILL WISH TO SPEAK WITH WEINSTEIN AGAIN
AFTER THE EASTER HOLIDAYS TO REIN HIM IN.
HILLENBRAND

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